

Write It, See It, Make It Happen

Enhancing your client's experience
with affirmations and visualizations

by Jenny McKaig

Using affirmations and visualizations with clients is a great way to enhance their fitness experience, and it sets a path to success in achieving goals because mind and body are aligned. We all know that when it comes to well-being, our minds and bodies must align for optimal health. This is why when we've got a client who is having a hard time with a fitness regime, or perhaps feeling challenged by adopting a healthy diet, it's important to discuss with them the wholeness of being healthy—and the necessity of not just exercising but of changing their mindset as well.

Affirmations and visualizations connect the client's mind and body—and they can be fun, too. Affirmations are written statements—positive and present tense—that help shift mindsets to more resourceful ways of thinking, drawing on inner strength and helping individuals realize their true strength within. This internal change of landscape inevitably leads to an external change: lifestyle changes become easier and fitness and exercise become a welcome part of life.

Visualizations work in much the same way. They open clients to redesign what's possible for their health and wellness goals by allowing them to see it first in their mind's eye, then seeing their visualizations transform into the reality of their lives. Shakti Gawain tells us, "There is nothing at all new, strange, or unusual about creative visualization. You are already using it every day, whether or not you are aware of it."

Gawain is then explaining to us the energetic understandings of the universe—we are all physical manifestations of energy, much like our thoughts and visualizations are a light-form frequency of energy, and in these we create our realities. Our thoughts and beliefs become what we know to be true and experience within our lives. In creating the most optimal inner landscape through affirmations and visualizations, we are able to help our clients see what's possible for them, and create those possibilities as well. Whether it's a new exerciser who wants routine to feel easier or an enthusiast looking to propel to the next level, improving clients' inner worlds allows a



Writing *exercise is easy and enjoyable* can help re-wire the brain and engrain the new belief.

Since our subconscious thoughts can be deeply rooted within, it's important to have clients create affirmations that truly meet them where they are. Just like stepping-stone goals we create as fitness professionals, we can encourage clients to make middle-ground, next-step affirmations to help them improve their inner world. This allows for a gradual shift in mindset, which creates a more authentic and sustainable change.

With visualizations, the change is in the way we see the world and what's possible within it. Just as affirmations can create a new, more conscious soundtrack of our thoughts and beliefs, visualizations can provide new possibilities for a consciously created film reel for what our clients can create with health and wellness.

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Visualizations work on a much deeper level than just the sight in the mind's eye. When we encourage clients to use visualizations as a way to step forward with their goals, we're actually helping them activate on a cellular level so the body is actually experiencing what's occurring within the mind. This experience is similar to reminding clients or group fitness participants to focus on a muscle while physically activating it to enhance muscular activation.

To activate this visualization with clients, ask them to start seeing themselves achieving their goal and taking the steps required to do so. Have them really experience either the achievement of the goal, the steps taken, or both, while visualizing. What would that feel like? What would the experience be, including all the senses, and how can they envision themselves completing their goal with more ease?

Such a vivid visualization deepens clients' experience of what's possible and begins to allow them to experience it in the first place. From there, actually achieving the goal becomes easier because they can actually address whatever might be holding them back—affirmations are great for any such awareness—and, if they were able to achieve the goal in their mind they've already activated a cellular memory of the experience within. This makes it much easier to bring to life in their current reality.

Both affirmations and visualizations are powerful tools to truly shift mindsets as a way of helping clients move forward. They can play an important role in achieving life-long goals, whether it's lasting weight loss, a healthy and sustainable lifestyle, or just plain feeling happier. By introducing our clients to these useful tools, we can help clients change their thought patterns from there's-no-way-I-can thinking to the truth of what we know as fitness professionals: we can all achieve anything when we set our minds to it.

change in their outer worlds as well.

With affirmations, the change begins with the words we think on the inside. The thoughts we think and the beliefs we hold are a subconscious soundtrack that plays continually in the background of our lives—and it drives the way we live. Changing this subconscious soundtrack to a more consciously created rhythm can mean the difference between our clients giving up on goals or powerfully achieving them. With an internal dialogue that aligns with the thought, *yes, I can*, everything our clients want to do becomes so much easier.

To change this inner landscape, have your clients write their created affirmation. The physicality of writing establishes a physical connection of brain to fingertips to pen to page (or fingertips to keyboard) while rewiring neural pathways to a more positive frame of mind. When encouraging clients to write affirmations, align their goals with a positive, present tense statement. For a client who wants to exercise more regularly, for example, you might suggest writing an affirmation that helps make this goal easier to achieve.



Jenny Mckaig, BAH Professional and Creative Writing, accredited Mind-Body specialist, certified Fitness Instructor and Awakening Coach, is an award-winning writer and creator of numerous correspondence courses and seminars designed to elevate a more vibrant state of well-being. A visionary and entrepreneur, Jenny is an innovator in writing, wellness, awakening and affirmations. To learn more, visit www.jennymckaig.com or connect with her at www.facebook.com/jenny.mckaig.